

Washington County Cemeteries -- Highland Township



Cemeteries in Highland Township, Washington County, Iowa. #35 - Salem; #36 - Harrisburg; #37 - Litzey (Kentucky)

This was another township where the scarcity of timber and the unevenness of the surface was a barrier to settlements except immediately on "Sorrell Creek" which passed through from West to East.

The township had many early settlements, though none are in existence today.

Early histories say Davis Creek was started in 1848 in Sec. 5, although the official listing of post offices has it "near the south west corner of Iowa Township." Nothing more is known about it except that it was along the Military Road.

One of the more stable settlements - Harrisburg - was laid out in 1855 in the southwest quarter of Sec. 14 by Nathan Burris. Its failure was attributed to the financial failure of Burris who had also started Burris City at the mouth of the Iowa River in Louisa County. His misfortunes struck in 1858 with the death of his wife and

later that fall when heavy rains flooded the Iowa River and the streets of Burris City with six to eight feet of water. Burris City died and so did Harrisburg.

A new post office called Dairy was established a few miles north of Ainsworth in 1863, on the old Military Road, in the southwest quarter of Sec. 9. That post office was discontinued in 1875.

The White Ash post office was established in the northeast quarter of Sec. 1 in 1873. It had only one postmaster, and closed about 1885.

Bethel post office was opened in the southeast quarter of Sec. 24 in 1897. It closed in 1904. The Mark L. Snyder family had the general store and when they moved to South Dakota (dismantling the store and taking it with them), the only thing that remained was a public mailbox until rural mail delivery began.

Haight Center was once called Ricedale, perhaps because there was a

family named Rice living in the area. There had been a settlement at the corner since at least 1840, when the Bethel United Brethren church was built just a few feet east of the line of Sec. 24, across the road in Louisa County.

Three cemeteries can be found in the township:

Harrisburg, in Sec. 22, east off Willow Avenue and south of 190th Street.

A Church of God was built at Harrisburg in the late 1850s. The obituary of Michael McGuire who died in 1905, states he was converted at the church in Harrisburg in 1862. The diary of Paradine Alfred records the difficulty in fording Goose Creek to attend church in the late 1850s and '60s.

Salem, in Sec. 24 east off Yucca Avenue and north of 205th Street.

The church at Salem was built in 1877, atop a hill overlooking the Goose Creek valley in Sec. 24 when the congregation of Harrisburg and Round Grove joined. The burial ground was probably set aside earlier since the oldest marked grave is that of Lydia, the one-year-old daughter of Michael and Lucinda McGuire, who died in 1866.

Litzey (also known as Kentucky), located in the northeast corner of Sec. 12, south of 170th Street, on the west side of the Louisa-Washington Road. Although easily accessible years ago with horse-drawn vehicles, it now has a very sharp grade which one has to climb before reaching the iron gate.

It is named for the family who must have had the first two burials there and donated the land to be used for such. Burials were Henry C. Litzey on Aug. 21, 1859 and Robert O. Litzey on May 30, 1863. They were the sons of James F. and Mary E. Litzey who owned the land at that time. They, along with the Owens family came from Breckenridge County, Kentucky, so perhaps that is why it is also referred to as the "Kentucky Cemetery."

The last burial was Robert Owen who died in 1966. The cemetery was used for over 107 years.

Editor's note: Information is a compilation of materials from Burrell's 1909 *History of Washington County* and Fisher's *In the Beginning There was Land*